

THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT

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EDITORIAL

THIS issue of *THE LIFE* has been designed to acclaim the publication of the first biography of Father Bede Jarrett, O.P. It is not that this review is directly indebted to Fr Bede for its existence as is the parent review, *Blackfriars*; for he had already been dead ten years before the first hesitant pages of *THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT* appeared. But Fr Bede should be considered as a grandparent of the review since he laid down the principles which inevitably developed into the publication of a magazine devoted to the true Christian life. Fr Vincent Reade shows this almost inevitably in the article below. And the biography itself is most noteworthy in its elaboration of the pattern according to which the outstanding English Dominican lived. Frs Kenneth Wykeham-George and Gervase Mathew have excelled themselves in this matter of the pattern of true life, enabling us to distinguish the two plans according to which he lived. Most men live from day to day without conscious or deliberate pattern in what happens to them. They are forced into a mould by surrounding circumstances; the job they do was presented to them as inevitable, the manner of their life is regulated by that job together with a whole series of external influences including the Government, the wireless, the standards of suburban or 'worker' culture. An outsider could perhaps look back on a man's life story and discern the pattern of providence, the way God had dealt with him by 'accidents' and world, as well as local, events. But the individual himself as a rule knows only the design of his weekly wage-pocket and of the commandments to remain faithful to his spouse and to keep holy the Sabbath day.

A Christian man who lives his faith to the full is able to discern a twofold pattern in his existence with which he can willingly co-operate and in which he can fill in the details. Father Bede Jarrett was such a Christian. First there is the design of the Word, who is the 'figure of God's Substance', and in whom all things are made. A Christian man looks directly to that pattern by means of his contemplative understanding of God's working in his life. Fr Bede was always

quietly resigned to this design that God had for his well-being. The concluding chapter of the biography, 'No Abiding City', brings out his conscious acceptance of the design of providence. 'Why worry?' is a sentiment that can be jazzed up into the most sickly of hearty bathos; but as a refrain to his life Fr Bede made of it the most wholehearted and positive resignation to God's creative and paternal will. Father Bede was so successful a father himself because he was seldom unconscious of the immediate presence of the heavenly Father. As Provincial or Prior he would take that personal interest in his subjects which changes the authority of the superior into the love of a parent. 'I hope, brother, that you are not cutting down your breakfast through any motives of piety', revealed the type of concern which led him to watch his 'subjects' at their food as well as at their work and prayer, not as an invigilator but as nourishing the Dominican life of his children. He learnt this from his wilful reliance upon the pattern of the Word of the Father.

But there is another pattern which requires a vigorously holy life to be able to fulfil it justly and successfully. This is the pattern of the man's own ideals. Not only did Father Bede look as it were backwards to the Father whence he had sprung, but he looked forward to the Father's Kingdom or household which was yet to be established. A man's own ideals as a general rule teem with selfish plans and ambitions and consequently clash continuously with the divine designs that mould his life. Initiative is so often individualism, a feathering of one's own nest. Only the initiative of the saint is purified of ambition and fitted into the movement of divine initiative. Above everything else the biography of Father Bede shows his initiative for the Order of Preachers to have been free from any ambition or individualism, and for that reason the book will remain a blueprint according to which the English Province of the Order of Preachers can continue to build its extensions.

Father Bede early developed his plans for his Order, the realisation of which would mean not only his own sanctification—they have already been sufficiently realised for that—but also the sanctification of the English Dominicans and

of those for whom they labour. He knew what he wanted in Oxford and in the British West Indies, in Persia and in South Africa; he knew what he wanted for the Dominican parish and the Dominican school; he knew what he wanted from the individual Dominican and from the Tertiary; he knew too what he wanted of a Dominican review. But in none of these plans was there the hard unliability of the self-opinionated man; he knew that these very ideals themselves came originally from the same fatherly plan '*in Verbo*' so that they too must be moulded by circumstances and occasions and personalities under God's control. This was the secret of his leadership and of his success.

There could hardly be found a more 'all-round' model of 'The Life of the Spirit', the example of a Christian man whose life was made always more abundant by being imbued with the life of Christ. His plans and his pleasures, his friends and his follies—nothing was merely rejected, nothing was destroyed by selfishness or ambition, but all was purified and brought consciously and deliberately within the scope of the divine plan. What Father Bede Jarrett possessed was LIFE, and he possessed it in abundance.

NOTE. The book to which reference is made several times in this issue is *Father Bede Jarrett, O.P.*, by Kenneth Wykeham-George, O.P., and Gervase Mathew, O.P. (Blackfriars Publications; 12s. 6d.). It is to be followed by volumes of Correspondence and Sermons, etc., by Fr Jarrett himself; a sample of these volumes will be found in the three letters and two conferences that are published, by courtesy of their editors, in the present issue of THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT.



ERRATA: In the January issue (Vol. VII, No. 79):

p. 321, l. 33: For 'Brompton Oratory' read 'Birmingham Oratory'.

p. 323, l. 14: A whole line was unfortunately dropped, reversing the sense of the sentence. It should read: 'Fr Steuart triumphed over his sensitivity and sense of isolation through his characteristic and intense desire for the "whole Christ".'

THREE LETTERS

BEDE JARRETT

I

Grayshott, April 11, 1924.

Dear Lady M.,

Just a line e'er (sic) I run away, to say that you must take your tiresome sleepless nights quietly and make them your prayers. You can't pray all the time, or indeed very much at all, if prayer means definitely things to be said or the conscious thought of the presence of God; but prayer includes also the resignation of our will to God, so just in the morning tell him you accepted the night watches in union with his, and at night offer them, before they happen, to him in the same union with his long watches. Don't worry or be agitated. Just take it all gently as it comes. You have always been gentle amid many troubles. Take this last trouble as you have taken all the rest.

And may God be with you always.

Sincerely,

F. BEDE JARRETT, O.P.

II

August 9th, 1925

Dear N.,

You ask that question at the end of your letter as Job asked it in that marvellous book of his all those years ago. Why should a man have to suffer when he's been most innocent, why should he have to suffer for another's sin? He certainly does have to. Most often the disloyalties of the world pain not the betrayer but the betrayed. The Agony of the Garden finds the sinners asleep and the Just One in his trouble alone.

None can be innocent as he was innocent, but at least we have times in life when we are less guilty than at others—it is in those less guilty moments, p'raps most heroic moments, that we have our rude shocks and anguish—when we deserved least.

But that 'deserve' philosophy of Job's friends ('You must

have been up to something to have had all this trouble dumped on you') was so shallow, so ununderstanding, that Job and we know it to be inadequate. Actually in the Book of Job, we know it to be wrong because we have been let into the secret in the first chapters and seen God and Satan both agree that Job is innocent. Without that first glimpse, the book would miss its dramatic quality; with it, we know the 'friends' are wrong.

Job learns (i) the fact that the guilty get off pretty freely and that the innocent suffer, and (ii) the interpretation, that suffering is not a spiritual evil but a spiritual good, and (iii) that God is too big a person for us to understand either in himself or in his policy and that we must just leave things to him.

But can't we say that all of us are redeemers of ourselves and of our world of friends and enemies and acquaintances and the rest? And that all redeemers must suffer somehow because of their justice, not because of their injustice, and that this suffering is apportioned in life not according to what we deserve but according to the sins of ourselves and our friends that we are so obviously called on to share.

To us, the Mass is precisely a morning reminder of that; he suffered for others, why not I? Mass and Communion the supreme philosophy of life, not read out of a dry and Imperial text book of stoic complacency, but obtained from the heart of a Friend, we on our knees, with *Dne non sum dignus* on our lips.

Mind, suffering accepted should not mean sorrow or glumness or depression or hurt vanity of that sort; no more than the Passion made him sorrowful. He was glad to carry our griefs, the fact that he was carrying them instead of our having to do so, must have pleased him thoroughly if he loves us as he said he did.

Similarly, then, when we are suffering for others, as we all have to do, we spoil it if we get depressed over it. Were we unselfishly fond of them, we would be glad—not of what has happened, but that we can bear the brunt of the pain of what has happened and so spare them.

We see all mortal kind as a *corpus mysticum* and we know surely that we do bear each other's pain, and that in so doing

we are privileged. The disciple isn't above the Master, is blessed to be even as the Master, broken, naked, lonely, betrayed, and offering all this for himself (we, not he) and for his friends loved passionately and for the world.

That is the Prelude only; the Adventure, who can guess? If you get as far as this in my letter forgive me my garrulity for I see that I've not answered your letter and daren't inflict more.

Affecy. B. o.p.

III

*Rectory of Our Lady of Lourdes,
New York,
February 2nd, 1933*

Dear J.,

I must thank you for the *Fountain* which I read coming across the ocean. In such conditions I could read it as it should be read, leisurely, and yet without reading anything else. I read it, brooding over it, provoked by it, wanting to argue over it, and so on. A most remarkable, most unusual book.

The author, as no doubt he has many times been told, has misunderstood the Catholic, medieval view of asceticism, which does not (and did not) teach that the body was evil. That was the heresy of the Albigeois which the Church dealt with drastically and cruelly (*inter alia* it held the marriage act to be sinful. The Catholic Church held and holds it to be good and blessed). Moreover, the whole mystical teaching of the Incarnation was precisely that flesh had been ennobled by Divinity: 'the Word was made flesh' is probably the most quoted Scriptural phrase in medieval literature. Besides Catholic devotion to our Lady supposes the same viewpoint. The body is holy: a living temple of God. However I think the medieval writers would have made two criticisms of the book. First they would have maintained that contemplation has a material philosophic meaning and that this contemplation can be reached by retiring into oneself deliberately and carefully, turning in and in; but that contemplation has also a spiritual, supernatural meaning and this contemplation can be reached by

the acquirement of the other but does not need it. Partly it does not need it because it is given by God, not acquired by man; partly because it is positive and not negative, the gazing of the soul at God. Man should not seek to retire into himself, but should retire upon God; he does not lay aside the world to look at God, but because he looks at God, lays aside the world. He is invulnerable, beyond the reach of ill-hap, because he has reached that which is all and without which there is none. He is not invulnerable because he is hardened, but invulnerable because what he has no one can take from him. To be invulnerable to ill-hap, because one is hardened against it, is stoical: to be invulnerable because one so loves God that one accepts whatever his will ordains and allows is the Christian asceticism. The centre of the Christian mystical life is God: 'Lord that I may love thee always and then do with me as thou wilt.' Thus the second point of criticism would be that such an aim as Allison had was inhuman. Man loves, must love. Man needs personal character to absorb and hold him. He cannot have a contemplative life unless it is the result of love. Hence the supreme centre must be God. God is apprehended as true, and so the apparatus of dogma is required. Dogma safeguards the true knowledge of God. We want and need to love God as he is, and not a caricature of God, a false, untrue image of him. Faith received (for man can't else know truly what God is like) Christ's teaching of the character of God; that is the base of all Catholic mysticism. The mystic demands solid truth as the essential beginning: 'contemplation is a sight', says Richard Rolle. Then because the soul sees him, it loves him for God is loveable, all good, all beautiful. God is love, goodness, beauty, as well as truth. So the personal being of God is loved (for Christ taught that as the first and only commandment). To love God is to fulfil man's nature: then he loves the world for God's sake. But contemplation needs a personal object, for it is 'a sight' which is to become a love.

But the depth of the book is in the arrival of Narwitz who develops all the other characters, shows the selfish and mean lack of control of the hero and heroine, and puts desire in its proper place as something to be disciplined. The arts are fine arts because of discipline; when discipline

fails them, when they cease to be austere, they become vulgar, flamboyant. Love is an art.

Moreover, the sanctification of man by suffering is the old Gospel re-taught. Only thro' suffering does a man see sanely and finely and truly. Thus here suffering cleansed him, lifted him, broadened his mind, and spirit, made him forgiving; at the end he faltered, drove Julie away, a lapse surely. The Magdalen was not dismissed when Christ came to die. The Mother and John were the most prominent, but not the only ones under the Cross. So, I judge that he failed in his width of vision, in the discipline of himself, in his hold on God when he told her to leave him! Human! but a failure of humanity. His sufferings should have given him that other heroism. But it is a very remarkable book. Charles Morgan needs the teaching of Christ in its fullness. He still stands outside the shrine. One can see how far he has got, with his sincerities and flaming desires and his judgment on the possibilities of man. Where he fails is in lacking the supernatural. He seems as great as a man can be who has not received the fullness, as great as the Greeks. Forgive this hurried verdict. Always yours,

FR BEDE, O.P.

NOTE: Charles Morgan, author of *The Fountain*. Allison is the hero.

FAITH IS LIFE

Sermon preached by Fr Bede Jarrett, O.P., at the Carmelite Church, Kensington, on the 17th October, 1922

The foundations thereof are in the holy mountains.

—Ps. 86, 1.

AS you read that story of St Teresa's life set out by her own hand, in which she describes with extraordinary simplicity and wonderful subtlety that real experience of her own soul in prayer, we see her gradually through life drawing nearer and nearer to God. What strikes one almost beyond her daring and her courage, beyond even, in a way, her love of God, is that throughout every page of that life, surging in her heart and expressed in all she said and wrote, beating through every page of it, there is such a flame of enthusiasm for her faith.

For anyone to reach so high a level as hers, to be able in some wise amid the pressure of life, still to hold God steadily in front of her in spite of opposition, perhaps because of it, somehow cheerful and quiet with this delicious peace of which she tells us—so to meet life must require very great powers of faith. She says herself she was perfectly willing to die a thousand deaths in defence of the faith or of the ceremonies of the Church; and it seems to us perhaps that her ordinary, positive, common-sense spirit has gone a little out-of-date, there is something excessive in that idea that a rubric should be of such importance to so wonderful a saint as St Teresa and to so spiritual a type of soul; but to her it is not so. There was nothing excessive, nothing out of the ordinary in such an outburst, because for her the whole of life was transfigured by faith. Her life began with faith and ended with faith.

Whatever people may say of their experiences of the mystical life, whatever any great authority of old time or of modern time, may say of that strange knowledge of God that steals into the souls of God's great lovers, St Teresa says over and over again that she never got beyond the edge of the Catholic faith. There was no knowledge or

consciousness or awareness of God other than that which came to her through the Catholic faith, and aflame as she so often was with the intense consciousness of the presence of God, it was no other than a mere vigorous act of faith.

I speak only for myself, she says, not for others.

Her friend and confessor, St John of the Cross, said that faith is the limit of all understanding in the human soul.

There is no assurance for the mystical soul, say these two who speak of their own personal experience, there is no awareness of God, except through the faith. But the faith for St Teresa meant no mere intellectual acceptance of certain truths, not simply a catechism which she learnt by heart—it was something to be lived. The Creed was no mere guide book, it was real, alive! She lived the Creed that she knew, and the faith for her from start to finish of her life was the one absorbing passion, the only reward here and hereafter. Knowledge of God can only come through the faith, and so between the pages of her Creed was set for her the whole learning of God, as it may be given from mind to mind, but she had to know and love, and knowing and loving, to find the way out to love and union.

I was ever, she says, a friend to learning, and as you read her life you find her studying the Creed. She is not above the teaching of the Church; she realised it as divine. It is God's own teaching to human souls of the way in which they should reach him.

We live in a Protestant country, we have to defend the Catholic faith, we have to quote texts of scripture, bring forward arguments; these things must be, and we need not lose by them, indeed it may be that we may gain by living in such an atmosphere, but we must beware that the Creed is no mere intellectual position that we hold, for it is not primarily so; it is first a life to be lived. It is the fuller, deeper, more splendid knowledge of God.

The faith, the Catechism, the Creed—these problems that torture mankind, that too often impatient spirits say they cannot accept because they are not in harmony with modern science, because they are not in step with it—my brethren, they are not in step with it, they are on a higher level altogether. They are separate, apart; and the Catholic

Church and these great mystical teachers, one by one they lifted the Catholic faith higher than any other religious body—and these assure us that no particle of the Creed but has its own help for human souls.

There are impenitent and angry souls, and there are kindly, humanitarian souls, to whom the idea of an unforgiving hell is abhorrent, but, says St Teresa, once you have accepted that, your knowledge of God grows greater. It is not that you say, how can I square that with the thought of a merciful God? These things are not given to perplex us, they are not given for that, but that somehow or other, something more of God's personality, a sense of God's unerring justice, may make us cling nearer to the heart of God.

Sentimental, emotional people as too often we are—(there is help in sentiments, but they require suppressing). . . God's mercy is infinite, and so also is God's justice, and unless you are willing to accept that idea of a terrible hell, you can have no real knowledge of the infinite being of God—no mystery, no truth, no article of the faith, no way of revelation, not God himself. What God is, we know by what God has done. It will and must help us to a truer, deeper, more perfect knowledge of God. It is not for us to say we cannot square that immense and immeasurable mercy. He did say these things, and if he said them, they are true. I cannot understand, but who can understand God? We get glimpses of God, we get crumbs that have fallen from his own table. For St Teresa, these things were a deeper knowledge of God, and that, after all, is all that matters.

'There is mischief in the world', she says in one place, though she was writing in Catholic Spain, but it was during the beginning of the Reformation. She is writing of her own country; and she says, there is mischief in the world because of the vanity of those who will not accept the faith, but who torture their minds about problems to which there is no solution. She tells us what the splendour of the faith is like: it is like a clear mirror that throws back the image of God. She insists that even to her own people in her own dear country, with a faith, you would say, stretching from end to end of its great high table-land and down into the valleys all about it, she says that the faith, not accepted,

wrought terrible mischief. For her, faith is the horizon of all human life. It is knowledge of God; every article of the Creed, every word in the New Testament, every clear truth of high sanctity—that is our perfect knowledge of God.

You see, my brethren, the real thing was that she was a contemplative, and contemplation for such a soul must rest on faith. A hard thing to understand to those outside the faith, and hard even to those in the faith. People say, what is the use of all this contemplation—these monks and nuns shut away behind grilles? It is the judgment of the world. They ask what they do. Why should that girl or boy be shut away? Why not work for their neighbour? Now for us, my brethren, life is entirely different. They, you see, would justify contemplation by active work. They say the religious life should be devoted to the service of one's neighbour. They judge by your devotion to your neighbour.

To a Catholic, all that external life is only justified by a knowledge and a love of God. By us, the terms are reversed, and no amount of human service and human labour will do final good in the world unless behind it is the driving impulse of the love of God. It is the simplest and clearest teaching of our perfect Master; it is only in those invisible truths that the outward and visible life is made perfect.

‘And if I should distribute all my goods to feed the poor, and if I should deliver my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.’ It is not the external works of man that justify his looking into the heart of God. Too many of us are content with merely doing good and not with being good, and all our doing is as wasted service without that inner heart to give it a real endurance. External activity is the work of man, and a man's work is too often gone before death itself leaves him, and all he has done becomes unpopular long before he sees the end; but God's work endures. The work of a man sometimes outlasts him, but a man who works for God is working for an eternal thing. The works of a man crumble, the works of God are full of God's own infinite greatness. God's works endure, and for us, therefore, the contemplative life has no need to justify itself. It is all that man shall do in all eternity. He shall know

God face to face, and that knowledge, with the thought of the infinite beauty of God unveiled before him, will move his heart to love. And contemplation, we say, is the final purpose of man. Why, you teach it to your children, you teach them to know God, to love God and to serve God. Service is the sun; an expression of love—love expresses itself in service. Service is the mere outward form of an invisible and enduring thing, and those who cannot serve and yet know love, contribute as much—we might almost say more—to the good of the world as others. 'The foundations thereof are in the holy mountains!'

Who of you here think of the foundations of the church in which you now are? A fine church, you say, beautiful lines, fine architecture; there is a spirit of devotion about it. Yet the church would not last a day were there no foundations well and truly laid. Who thinks of that? You do not think of it for a moment. Faith is so; it is simply the best of life, and all the beauty and wonder of man's endeavours are useless without that perfect foundation that shall endure, and that foundation is the knowledge of God, and the knowledge of God is in some way a partaking of God himself. For this, says St Peter, is the participation in the divine nature. Man enters into the life of God himself.

The Church was, to St Teresa, the revealer to her of the secrets of the Son of God. God came and spoke, and, she says, there is the Master, because faith comes to us explained by the Catholic Church. She herself gives no message, but she explains the Master's message. The word is not of the Church, the word is of Christ, with the explanation, authoritative, actual, living, given from the living lips of the Catholic Church. She interprets the divine message. The divine message is lost to humanity unless they can find the meaning of it.

Our explorers who have gone from end to end of the world have sometimes come across inscriptions which no man can read; of what service are they? They may be the solution of all our problems, but what is the use? Here and there a scholar comes and fumblingly spells out the whole, and the next scholar comes and has another version. What benefit can man get out of that? And were the words of God

written and no man knew for sure, how would it profit a man? He would not know whether it were yea or nay, and all the precious message would be lost. The Church does nothing to the words of God, she merely tells us what Christ said, and it is not her meaning at all. She is merely the interpreter to us of God's own spoken word. Faith is the best of life; with it we shall know the road into the word of God.

St Teresa bids us, when we are troubled, to leave for the moment all our perplexity, to come into prayer forgetting our own needs, even at times to get right away from all perplexities of human life, to stand face to face with God, to leave everything, and to rejoice only in his divine company; and then, she says, to go back to your own life, and the problems will solve themselves. No one can find the answer to the problem in his own brain; he may find it in the brain of God. No man can answer problems out of the loneliness of his own heart, but he may find an answer in the infinite heart of God. You must look up to God to find the answer. And strange as it may seem, that is the *only* answer to man, and she quotes a sentence from St Augustine: 'That God is not as easily met with in the street or the market place, as he is met with in your own soul'.

And I suppose, my brethren, that is the truest, greatest thing St Teresa can teach us. If we can learn that from her, we have learnt a great deal, for there lies the secret of the contemplative life. It is not in the energy of life or in the pressure of life, nor in the service of humanity, that you will really find your way into God; these things are good, and if you have a love of God, you will be driven to do these things, but God is the more important of the two, and you must look to God, love him, serve him; then you will be a lover of God's own creatures. You cannot love anyone without loving the things they have made, and all humanity is God's workmanship.

And for us, my brethren, that is our lesson. We must climb the great high hills of faith.

In the streets of men the higher they build their houses the less is seen of the sky. In those great modern cities across the ocean, where the buildings lift themselves storey

by storey nearer and nearer to the skies, the heavens are narrowed by the height of the work of man; but the hills are not like that, for the higher you climb the nearer you get to the wideness of the sky, the more easily is it to be seen. For us who know human life, if we would live at all we must see things steadily and see them whole, we want to take a fair view of ourselves and our own troubles, not to be irritated or worried with the monotony of life, but to see life wider than that, to be catholic in our faith, our knowledge, our love, our lives, as in that great spectacle our Master made from the high hill of Calvary.

We too have our heights to climb, and St Teresa was a Catholic and Carmel is a hill. Let us picture the valley of Jezreel, where Elias paced in great haste, outstripping the chariot of the king, with the sweep of the rain down its steep sides. From the heights of Carmel he had seen the gathering storm and had hastened to the city that he might tell of the coming of the rain. It is on Carmel that you see the storm, not in the valley. There is no need to be told by others; you can climb yourself through faith, which will lift you above the level of other lives not so blessed as yours, and you will find that the only answer to man is at last to be discovered in the heart of God. Man's little problems will never be answered by man's ideas, even, but only by the knowledge of God. If you would help man, help yourself. If you would see your way through life, do not go beyond the borders of faith; other knowledge will help you, but faith will answer your problem.

As you see, when you go out this evening, the leaves of the trees fretted against the night sky, you see it as a thing of beauty and colour and light; it arrests you and silences you momentarily, even in cities where men toil with curses on their lips. The world is beautiful because it is God's world. But there is a world more beautiful, more enduring, more strong, and behind all is God, and God is that great hill from which a man must be lifted up to see widely and highly all human life.

RELIGIOUS RESPONSIBILITY¹

Sermon preached by Fr Bede Jarrett, O.P., for the ceremony of clothing and first vows. Roehampton, 8 September, 1923.

Walk whilst you have the light, that the darkness overtake you not.—John 12, 35.

IT might seem as you come out from the great city, from the mighty labyrinth that is spreading across your river, as you pass by the gradually diminishing houses, and face the wide stretch of common, and then turn up the lane, it might seem as though this convent stood symbolically for all convents, as a haven of rest. It might seem as though the waste stretch of land was set there, as though the high walls had been built as a shelter, as though here people might escape from the foes around them, laying aside the noise and bustle, the responsibility and the dreadfulness of human life.

In this haven of rest, young and old come to spend in undisturbed peacefulness the even tenor of their lives. Is this right? It is wrong. To escape the responsibility of the labour and toil of life is not Christian but cowardly; it is the very contrary of the teaching of our Master. Religious life is not to escape, to get away, it is not shirking. You are here today to make your profession; the very word means life; it is not getting away, dodging, shirking; it is a seeking, not an escape.

Responsibility? What responsibility do we escape? In little exterior things, perhaps, but the decision of our own life is still with us, the responsibility of our own soul, our work, our prayer, the real things that weigh people down. It is the things of the spirit that matter. Religious are really never off duty, they are always on the alert. 'From the morning watch even to the night'—and our work is never done; through the night we are still religious, we still work, still

¹ This sermon is reproduced, as it was taken down by a listener at the time, in an attempt to recapture something of the style of Fr Bede Jarrett's preaching. Those who heard him will recognise his voice in this. Those who were not so privileged will have to try to listen to a voice rather than to read the printed word.—EDITOR.

toil; death alone ends it. Responsibilities! We come to court greater responsibilities; ours will be a more severe judgment. Others will be judged on the commandments, but we have deliberately chosen to be judged also by the counsels. We have chosen it because it seems to us a fuller and more splendid life, but at the end we shall be judged more severely than the rest. More terrible our position! Do they speak of dodging, of escaping responsibilities? We have courted greater responsibilities, more toil, severer judgment, temptations even. Does the cloister wall shut out temptations, or does it shut in a little corner in which they can eddy round gathering more force? We escape nothing, we have avoided nothing, we have sought out greater responsibilities, sought the very centre of the battlefield.

‘Walk whilst you have the light, that the darkness overtake you not.’ Before us is life, something real and positive, a positive following of the divine Master, who as he strides ahead—we behind him—calls out, ‘I must needs work whilst it is day; the night cometh when no man can work’.

To that cry our ears are tuned, our lives are set. We take vows not that we may escape trouble, but to work more securely and in freedom. ‘A narrow life’, they tell us. The life must be narrow; yes, it needs must if you would do the work. A specialist rejects this, that, and the other, that he may concentrate on one line; he does not lessen, but adds to his work by rejecting. To take all things—that is dissipation; to take one thing—that is a risk, but it is necessary for work. Take your steam: it was everywhere and it was doing—nothing! One man saw it, as they told us when we were children, he compressed it in a kettle, he made it narrow—that it might do no work? Nay, rather that it might drive great pistons and revolutionise the face of the earth. Take your friend gas: we set a mantle on it, make it incandescent, we make it narrow, but the heat and light are not lessened.

Human life is like that. It must be narrowed to do the work. The butterfly is to us the symbol of a wasted life. It flies from place to place over a wide and unlimited stretch of land. And then it dies. It has accomplished nothing.

By the vows we drop things that we may concentrate; we reject that our life may be narrowed down to work. It seems to me like a great captive balloon straining on the ropes that still hold it to the earth. The man leans out and cuts the last ropes that hold it. Is he shirking the responsibilities of earth? No, it is built for the skies, for the great free heaven of God. It does not seek escape by its straining, it is seeking greater danger, adventuring into the great storms without shelter, seeking a wider sphere. Our vows are so for us, cutting all the things that hold us to earth, that we may go to the things we are made for, to the free sky of God. It is a life, a profession, and it has almost to be done feverishly.

‘Walk whilst you have the light.’ We have just got this little span of life and on that rests the future; from the darkness before our birth, to the darkness after, that little life is rounded by a sleep. There is no possibility of overwork, no chance to do too much. Are we not forgiven if between these rounded ends of life we take vows that we may do more, that we may deliberately set aside the hindrances to our work? Work—we must work else we die, we work according to our capacity; it is the command of God, it is the call of our Master. Not shirking, but seeking, not escaping, but going out to meet, not to avoid, never off duty, working to the end, but always with our hearts at peace. Religious stand betwixt time and eternity, working in the little time between the ends of life, while it is light, knowing that everything must be got in somehow, with a certain rush, haste, feverishness—children of time, but children of eternity seeing through time to a wider territory. . . . The eyes of a child and the heart of God.

‘Work whilst it is light.’ It is the cry of our Master. You begin your religious life today; you have come that you may labour to the end, labour first in your soul. No man who puts his hand to the plough in that labour and then turns back can be worthy of the kingdom of God. First of all the cultivation of your own soul, that in good time you may work on the souls of others. You enter under the spirit of the compassionate heart of our Lord, and though that heart was so sorrowful when entering on his passion, yet it was

radiant, full of desire and at peace. For us the way of the cross is a dolorous way, but not to him; he went radiantly, and in joy. To us the Passion is a story of sorrow, to him of joy. What lover is sorrowful in suffering for his beloved? He seeks out hard things, and does them not grimly but with radiance and with peace.

In sorrow, yet always rejoicing; having nothing, yet possessing all things; working always, yet with heart always at peace. It is the spirit too of the Mother whose birthday we keep today. In her daily toil alone with the child and with the father, her heart pierced with a spear, sevenfold, a heart steeped in loneliness. Alone when she followed her son on the outskirts of the crowd. He was anybody's but hers. Alone when he was gone and she was left on earth, lonely working without him, desolate, yet radiant with joy in her heart, working while there was light.

And it is the same in that great spirit who still breathes over this house, who found in the hunting-field a symbolism that explained to her the difficulties and hardships of the life. Surely it was to her as a great gallop over wide spaces, stern and perilous but full of the joy of peril.

Darkness cometh when no man can work; beware lest it overcome you. The critic and cynic are at the door, they damp the ardour of life, smother the ideals of life. No religious, no true religious can be a critic or a cynic; we must be unrelenting, hastening ready to work before it is dark, living a life of enthusiasm and labour. For the night cometh.

Ah, the night cometh! Watchman, what of the night? Beyond the night is the day, beyond the day shall break the shadows; all these shadows shall flee away.



AN OUTSIDER LOOKS AT A GREAT DOMINICAN

VINCENT READE, Cong. Orat.

FOR many years, and indeed almost till the end of his life, Bede Jarrett was to me a remote though beneficent figure; important and attractive but in the background. I never heard him preach; I had never read even one of his books; I met him personally but once and then had not the

opportunity of conversing with him. I was, however, deeply interested in the striking expansion of the Dominican Order in England, both on account of men whom I knew among its younger generation, and because I saw the valuable impression that the O.P.s were making on English Catholic life and thought. As one, moreover, who though not an Oxford man was constantly in and out of that city and university, I was delighted with the comely establishment in St Giles, where—apart from its influence as a centre of learning and study—its daily Sung Mass and Office were and are something ever to be grateful for, cheering and uplifting the whole religious life of that unparalleled religious centre—liable however, as like all university centres it is, to become too exclusively theoretical and academic. Now in my own mind—and I suppose rightly—the expansion and consolidation of the English Province of the Order of Preachers was largely the work of Fr Bede, and I knew of his constantly repeated (Rome-dispensed) re-election as Provincial, which obviously told a tale.

Gradually, moreover (I speak for myself only), things began to trickle through concerning Fr Bede which tended to show unusual judgment and unconventionality of outlook, though both of these on the lines of the sane and practicable in things spiritual, without surrender—if I may so say—of the christianly heroic, and backed by a personal spiritual life which reached the heights. Then (after a long interval, of course) came the extracts and reprints of Fr Bede's words in *THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT*, which both confirmed my rather vague impressions and excited my enthusiasm; and now, with the biography of Frs Kenneth Wykeham-George and Gervase Mathew, the picture is completed and we see before us a uniquely valuable religious teacher and leader, claiming a significance far beyond the limits of his own Order.

Writing in a personal way, and not without trepidation at finding myself on such holy ground, I cannot refrain from indicating briefly what seems to me of especial value and importance in Fr Bede Jarrett's spiritual teaching and trend. And I venture to do this because what I am going to say, though fully contained in his writings and sayings, is

not always said explicitly—perhaps partly by reason of his persistent unobtrusiveness: that delightful and admirable quality so evident in Fr Bede and not always quite evident (if I may dare to say so) in spiritual writers. Over and over again, it seems to me, he quietly and kindly puts in its place flamboyance and unreality in respect of things spiritual, and indicates (not perhaps without a touch of humour) to us what we ourselves are likely to be able to achieve, or at any rate where we had better begin. A good deal of spiritual writing—not always uselessly—makes us say: ‘How wonderful; how splendid!’ and then, on reading Fr Bede, we say: ‘Why, here is something which will help me to pray and live rightly this very day—and tomorrow—and the next day’. And yet we are not by any of his words deprived of high spiritual aspiration and ambition; only shown where we are at the moment and what must be our next few steps. Permanently, however, we are warned off spiritual attitudinising of every sort and kind: as to that I feel certain.

I have alluded to my one brief personal contact with Fr Bede, and I did not then realise how even in those few moments he revealed himself. But I noticed the elevated calm of his manner and I heard him express sympathy with a strike which was then in progress—in a company, I fancy, which was either indifferent to the same or unsympathetic. I see him now as a man who habitually was little influenced by common opinion because he lived permanently in a higher atmosphere than the ordinary; and a man also who formed an independent and unconventional judgment on all matters—with a wonderful capacity for being right; and this in the spiritual as well as in the terrestrial realm. Never was his judgment, I should think, either derivative or popularity-seeking; yet also, never captious or originality-seeking. And that atmosphere of his own in which he perseveringly lived was assuredly the atmosphere of spiritual elevation. (I wish I had not used so many awkward phrases in attempting to describe a character so eminently simple.)

Being therefore thus painfully conscious of having in these random paragraphs used many clumsy phrases in speaking of one whose character was (as I feel) so pre-eminently uncomplicated, though certainly very rich, it is a

relief to me to be able now to point to a few passages in the biography which is now before us, and to two or three brief reprints of Fr Bede's written or spoken words, which will make abundantly plain what here I have said obscurely and roundaboutly. If I were asked by anyone to tell him what sort of a man the great Dominican was, in himself and in his thought, I should feel inclined to say: 'Read Sir Ernest Barker's tribute in *The Times* and Mr Coulton's letter (pp. 154 and 27 of the biography), then read Fr Bede's two sermons—at an ordination to the priesthood (p. 16) and the other on Good Friday which also, to my mind, might be described as a poem—and a very good one (biography p. 151). Read the account of his dealing with a subject whom he wanted to send to Grenada (biography p. 44). And then read what appears under Fr Bede's name in *THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT*, April 1951 and June 1951 (*The Sinner*, and *Prayer*). Here you will find all that I have tried to say, and much more—e.g., the exquisite tenderness, tact and even humility of a truly exceptional man and religious superior; and a teacher who enters into our hearts.

I have described this little dissertation as the view of an outsider because I desired to emphasise my deep consciousness that what I say must appear woefully inadequate (if not beside the mark) to members of Fr Bede's Order, and because I scarcely knew this great Dominican personally. But also I do not for a moment forget that any one man's view of a rich personality must be conditioned and limited by what the viewer himself is. I have said what I could, and what I much wished to say. But before leaving my subject I cannot refrain from running the risk of raising a wider and more speculative question, even if here I shall be found notably out of my depth. Yet it is suggested to me—and has long been suggested to me—by Fr Bede Jarrett's own words and writings, following upon another something that has appeared in *THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT*:

In numbers 52 and 55 of this review there appeared two articles bearing the striking name of *The Divorce of Mysticism from Theology*, by Fr F. Vandenbroucke, o.s.b. Into the gist of these I will not here enter, but they dealt with an

important evolution in mystical teaching which took place between the fourteenth and the sixteenth centuries. Now what I venture to suggest here is that in our own age another revolution may be taking place, with Fr Bede Jarrett as one of its leaders. I should call it (for want of a better title) 'The de-regimentation or de-schematisation of Mental Prayer'. It is true that we can trace this movement back pretty far—to St Philip Neri, perhaps, through St Vincent de Paul and others unknown to my amateurishness (I should feel inclined to include St Paul of the Cross)—but it has not in standard books been given its proper place (if I may speak so boldly); partly perhaps because schemes lend themselves so much better to teaching and writing, and partly because the sublime writings of certain saints have been made to cover too much ground. Here I am helped by an authoritative teacher of the seventeenth century, the Carthusian Dom Innocent le Masson, who says, among many other wise things, 'Holy people have expressed their own particular experiences, which are not general rules', and before returning to Fr Bede I would mention how interesting and suggestive also I found something recently written by another Benedictine in one of our religious periodicals to the effect that many religious might well go back rather literally to St Benedict himself who in his Rule seems to place the essence of contemplative prayer in prayerful singing and recitation of the Divine Office followed (according to taste and attraction) by short periods of private meditation. But what I have in mind as to Fr Bede Jarrett himself is his gentle but very firm insistence on each person's prayer being entirely his own and beginning from any such real approach to God as he can achieve, and—I think he would have added, not introspective. The great mystics in the past did write from experience, but as we do not live in the fourteenth or sixteenth century, and as we are not Flemings or Spaniards, these experiences (to follow Dom le Masson) should not be made into rules. I have always thought that the poet Coventry Patmore spoke truly when he said that the saints show on a vast scale what all of us ought to be and do after our own measure; but even this, surely, must be on the broad lines. Here again, as above, I would beg my

readers to forget what I myself splutter out and turn to the *ipsissima verba* of our great Dominican, with his insistence that whatever else may be said, no one's prayer is right unless it is his own approach to his heavenly Father; not planned according to anything that has been read in books, or conceived in the terms of any set scheme of anticipated experiences or results. This wise and safe guide places our feet upon the rock. And all the time, surely, he is directly or indirectly telling us not to be introspective, but to have our eyes fixed solely upon God and to go step by step as God leads us.

An 'outsider', it would seem, should not attempt to go further and say more, but the outsider who has penned these lines is convinced that in Fr Bede Jarrett he catches the lineaments of a notably significant spiritual teacher and personage—outstanding (to say the least) in a calm and elevation of mind which made him courageously indifferent to the opinions of men; detached from the world though full of human sympathy and feeling; and in spite of his unobtrusiveness, prophetic in his ascetical doctrine; unexplicitly but indubitably a pioneer.

"THAT THE CHURCH MAY SPREAD AND INCREASE: this is the intention for which we must offer our prayers and our labours", says Pope Pius XII in his encyclical on the Mystical Body.

The work of the Mill Hill Fathers in Africa, India, the Far East and New Zealand, has this one aim. You can work with them for the spread of the Church by fostering vocations to the missionary priesthood.

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THE LIFE OF FR BEDE JARRETT ¹

BENEDICT STEUART, O.S.B.

THIS life of Fr Bede Jarrett by two of his own Dominican brethren fulfils a long-felt hope. Ever since his death in 1934, his many friends have looked forward to a record of his life and work—especially during his long Provincialate of sixteen years—and a pen-picture of his lovable character and his very real holiness.

Only his own Brethren could write with full authority and understanding about his life as a Dominican, as a simple religious, as Prior and as Provincial. But among the large number of friends in other religious orders and in the world as well, many will no doubt be able to complete the picture, from a slightly different angle, in one way or another.

My own friendship with Cyril Jarrett began in very early days—indirectly, if one can put it like that, through his father and mother who were great friends of my own father and mother. I have very pleasant memories, even as a small boy, of visits made by Colonel Jarrett to our old home, Ballechin, in Perthshire—not so many of Mrs Jarrett, who, I think, found the very long (and in those days not very comfortable) journey up to Scotland rather too much for her. Curiously enough, I never met Cyril or any of his brothers until he and I met at Stonyhurst in 1893.

Cyril was ahead of me at the College by two years; how well I remember our first meeting after I had come up, a shy 'new boy' from Hodder, the preparatory school under the fatherly—even 'motherly'—care of Fr Cassidy, the best-known and remembered of all its heads. Cyril came up to me in the playground, all smiles and friendliness, and said: 'I say, I think we "know" each other!' Neither of us—again, curiously enough—had been told that we were to meet at school, and both had wondered vaguely if the Jarrett or Steuart at the College and at Hodder were more than just names.

¹ *Bede Jarrett of the Order of Preachers*. By Kenneth Wykeham-George, O.P., and Gervase Mathew, O.P. With a Foreword by Very Rev. Fr Hilary J. Carpenter, O.P., Prior Provincial of the English Dominicans. (Blackfriars Publications; 12s. 6d.)

But that meeting started a real and deep friendship between us which, although we did not afterwards meet very often or for long at a time, was always something more than mere acquaintanceship. At Stonyhurst, Cyril and I usually spent a good deal of our recreations talking together about our respective vocations—he as a Dominican, I as a Benedictine. In fact, a mutual ‘chum’ (I think it was Bertram Kirby—now, I am glad to see from the magazine, President of the Stonyhurst Association) declared that it was quite impossible to remember ‘which was going to be which. ‘I shall call you both “Dominictine”,’ he said.

Cyril and I entered our novitiate fairly close together—he went to Woodchester in 1898 and I to Fort Augustus the following year. During the whole of our novitiate periods we kept up a regular correspondence, discussing our experiences, comparing notes and so on. How I wish, now, that I had kept his letters! I remember at least, that they were often a great help to me—although ‘Brother Bede’ as he had now become, had not in any way ‘set out’ to help me. But often his evident contentment and his thoroughness in his vocation cheered me up and encouraged me in my own. We kept on our correspondence right up, I think, to his ordination in 1904. I myself was not ordained till 1907. We certainly still wrote regularly while Fr Bede was at Hawkesyard. After our ordination, letters became less frequent; but that fact and the fact that there were ‘wide spaces’ between our occasional meetings, in no way lessened our friendship. Fr Bede had the great gift of always making one feel that one was ‘wanted’, that there was complete sympathy and understanding; it was never necessary to begin all over again. All his friends, I think, would agree as to this. As the authors say, ‘Fr Bede had been making close personal friendship ever since he had been at Stonyhurst. Through the years their numbers increased steadily, for none of them would ever seem to have been lost.’ (p. 114.)

To have read this life by Fr Kenneth and Fr Gervase is really as though one could see him again and hear him speak—see him as clearly as in the typical picture of him on page 136, which also looks out, with just the beginning of his friendly smile, on the cover.

WORK ¹

GABRIEL OF ST MARY MAGDALEN, O.C.D.

ARTICLE EIGHT of the Apostolic Constitution *Sponsa Christi* speaks of work and asks that it should be organised in such a way that by its means, together with other legitimate resources, it will be possible to ensure the support of the convent.

It is this ruling of the new Constitution which, in many convents, will make its consequences chiefly felt, and which demands a generous correspondence on the part of nuns. On this account we would make both the idea proposed and also its practical outcome clear, explaining at the same time its importance from the spiritual point of view.

Everyone knows the distressing condition in which many convents found themselves during, and principally after, the last world war. Daily bread was often lacking and this is still the case with regard to a number of convents, where the nuns find it difficult to exist. Various factors have contributed to this painful state of affairs. It was in many places the destruction caused by the war; then the devaluation of money which has lessened dowries and reserves of capital, reducing actual income to insignificance; at the same time and fundamentally for the same reasons, alms have diminished.

To sum up, various sources of income, common in past times, have nearly or altogether ceased to be represented on the budget; it is therefore understandable that in many communities the economic equilibrium has been threatened, or entirely upset, with the result that the nuns are faced with misery.

In certain countries financial difficulties had already begun to make themselves felt after the first world war, but as these took on minor proportions, many communities found a way of adapting themselves to these difficulties, and

¹ From a Commentary on *Sponsa Christi*. The author and translator have kindly granted leave for the publishing of two chapters of this Commentary in THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT. The whole text may be obtained in English from Monastero S. Giuseppe, Via Ancilotto, 6, Roma, Italy.

avoided a crisis, or succeeded in overcoming it without serious inconvenience. In other countries, and this is the case in Italy, the disaster came more suddenly and was more violent so that the consequences have been felt everywhere and often very seriously.

Appeals to the Holy Father have multiplied to such a degree that the Holy See is not able to relieve so much need solely by means of charity; it is necessary to find means to adjust the situation, and a timely remedy is indicated in article 8 of the Constitution. Among reasons revealing the need for a 'renewal' in cloistered Orders, the explanatory part of the Constitution emphasises in the first place the state of economic misery of many convents.

One of the principal means, if not to say *the* principal means, for carrying into effect the aforesaid 'renovation' is contained in the provisions of article 8. And it is indeed a case for 'renovation' because in many convents there is no actual existing tradition of productive work. This must not cause surprise, for it is simply explained by the economic condition of past times, when the principal means of support depended on capital and income, while now the economic centre of gravity is rapidly becoming, or has become, that of work. When currency was of gold a certain quantity of it secured the livelihood of its owner. Now money has become merely a token, subject to continual devaluation, and may even entirely lose its value. Therefore intelligent parents of today, rather than leave their children a certain sum of money, prefer to spend their substance in giving them an education which will make them capable workers, whether this work be intellectual or manual. They are right; for persons of today their real insurance consists in their capacity for work. The time will come for nuns also—and in a certain sense it has already come—when the most secure dowry for a young girl wishing to enter a convent will be her capacity for work.

Indeed the central disorganisation observable in the economic world must inevitably have its repercussions also in the economic life of our convents. So that in convents also from now onwards it will be necessary to depend more entirely upon work in order to balance the budget; and in proportion

as previous resources diminish, perhaps even to vanishing point, it is clear that income derived from work must increase.

Many have realised this for some time past, but it was difficult to make it understood in surroundings which are not in direct contact with the life of the world; now however as the Holy See has spoken, nuns, as devout daughters of the Church, will trustfully welcome its ruling and will yield a filial obedience. Our nuns in fact have always been busily engaged with work; anyone who has the opportunity of following their life closely will have become aware of this. Their hands are always occupied. However, for the most part their work has been almost entirely directed to maintaining the possessions of the community in good order. Poverty has been practised particularly by means of economy, it has been sought to make things last; darns and patches have therefore been multiplied, time being taken up in excess of what a more rational economic organisation would allow. To be practical in this matter: a piece of new material could often advantageously take the place of many darns. Those who desire to produce must take account of the time factor. Our holy Mother Teresa understood this well, and wrote in her first Constitutions: 'The Office is to be recited throughout (i.e. to be said, not sung, therefore shorter), as also the Mass, so that there will remain, please God, a little time in which to earn a living'. Here we see the holy Mother Teresa saving time at the expense both of the Mass and the Divine Office, in order to give her daughters time to earn their bread. Notice that our Mother's first idea was that her daughters should gain their living by the work of their hands, together with the alms sent to them by Divine Providence, and it was only when constrained by force that she accepted an income for some of her convents; and this only followed the express and insistent advice of the great Dominican theologian, Father Banez, whom she did not feel it right to oppose. Nevertheless the preferences of our holy Mother were always for convents without incomes, so that for us now to return to an economic organisation based on labour is only to return to our holy Mother Teresa's primitive plan which was always her favourite. This how-

ever certainly requires organised effort. A number of convents have already made this effort, and often successfully. There are several communities who really live by their work, or almost do so, and this without having sacrificed any traditional observances. Their example should strengthen and console those now faced by the 'renovation' requested by the Holy See.

While asking of nuns this effort for the organisation of productive work, Holy Church has acted in a most motherly way, being anxious not only to secure their material subsistence, but also to help their spiritual life in the best way possible. Therefore before giving expression to her requirements, as set forth in article 8, Holy Church, in the explanatory part of the Constitution, has represented to nuns in the happiest way how it is possible to combine this more intense application to work with that search for union with God which is characteristic of their contemplative life.

These teachings are so rich, and may be foreseen as so fruitful, that they could serve as a basis for a 'mysticism of labour'. . . . These teachings contain an appreciation of work both moral and spiritual, which we may well take into account of in our lives, and for this reason we must not neglect some explanation of them.

The Constitution begins by assigning to work its place in life both human and moral. Work is a law of human life, which life we must work to sustain. 'The man who refuses to work must be left to starve', writes St Paul (2 Thess. 3, 10). This famous saying of the great Apostle—without however any reference to him—finds place, under the formula, 'he who will not work shall not eat', even in the Soviet Constitution. The law is truly universal and imposes itself also on contemplatives, as we see in this Constitution.

Besides, work has, according to Genesis, both a penitential and a satisfactory side to it. 'Still thou shalt earn thy bread with the sweat of thy brow' (Gen. 9) said God to Adam after his fall. Man is also morally rehabilitated by work. Not only this; man is ennobled and humanly perfected by work, both because in avoiding idleness he avoids so many occasions of evil-doing and also because work itself, consisting of a systematic application of various faculties,

serves to develop in them their natural aptitudes and so perfects the man himself.

We must add that work, besides being a human law, is also precisely a law of religious tradition. The ancient Benedictine Rule teaches *Ora et labora*. Also the Carmelite Rule in its paragraph on manual work, as well as the corresponding chapter of the Constitutions of our holy Mother Teresa, show that work has always held a place of honour in the Carmelite religious tradition.

Nuns however must not see in work only a noble occupation in accordance with the exigencies of human nature and religious tradition; there is in work something still more uplifting, for when it is accomplished under the conditions set forth by the Constitution *Sponsa Christi* it becomes a great instrument of spiritual progress. This is the most interesting part of the Holy Father's teaching.

The Constitution explains that for work to be done from the supernatural point of view it must fulfil the following conditions:

1°. It must be undertaken with a pure intention (*sancto proposito*), that is to say, proposing to self the holiest end that can be, namely, the glory of God and the good of souls from whence to draw the double love which should burn in the heart of every contemplative.

2°. It should be accompanied by the exercise of the presence of God, by frequent remembrance of God keeping the heart turned towards him during the work itself.

3°. It must be undertaken under obedience (*ex oboedientia capiat*). This point most immediately renders it an instrument of spiritual progress. Since union with God takes place by means of the will, and is realised by the transformation of the human will into the divine will (St John of the Cross, *Ascent*. I, n. 2), all that tends to unite our will with the divine will becomes an effective means of progress towards divine union. Now work imposed by obedience and regulated by it comes to us as a secure manifestation of the divine will, of which the commands of the Superior are the normal expression. Thus the religious who works under obedience, who wills, that is, to execute the work imposed upon her, in her very application to the work itself unites

her will to the divine will. Indeed, the more the work costs, and the greater the effort required, the more intense becomes the act by which the human will is united to the divine will. It is therefore clear that work done under obedience becomes an instrument of divine union. And it is undoubtedly the exercise of the presence of God which will help the soul to maintain this interior disposition during working hours.

4°. It must be combined with a voluntary self-mortification, and sacrifice. This is largely arrived at if we work under obedience, because in so doing we renounce our own will, and also because work is a continuous source of sacrifice and self-immolation, if only on account of the distaste which has to be overcome.

Even if it must be said, speaking of corporal mortifications, that fatigue caused by work voluntarily endured for a long time is neither the grandest nor the most praiseworthy form of mortification, still it is much less exposed than is the use of instruments of penance to little moral imperfections, and has the great advantage of being a hidden mortification usually known to God alone to which very commonly those with whom we live pay no heed. Often a Superior reluctant to allow the use of instruments of penance will easily permit the assumption of fatiguing work.

We may therefore conclude with the Holy Father that work so undertaken becomes 'a powerful and constant exercise of all the virtues'. It is an expression of love towards God, because undertaken for his love; of love towards our neighbour because it is done in order to procure bread for the community; it becomes prayer because accompanied by the practice of the presence of God; it is eminently an exercise of obedience, a continuous practice of spiritual and corporal mortification, and finally also a great exercise of poverty.

(To be concluded)

POINT OF VIEW

[The burden of two letters to the Editor]

WITH reference to *Scotland of the Saints*, I have just finished writing a companion book for Ireland, taking the idea of 'a more natural indigenous type' of holiness further, and also trying to link up the development of the Celtic Church with the main stream of Church history. It does appear that the Celtic saints succeeded in achieving a complete integration of work and study and liturgy which we lack today. I think it was partly because of the rural basis of life in Celtic Ireland, that the nearer you are to essential things like ploughing and harvesting, the easier it is to achieve that kind of integration. I suppose there are many and different ways to God; writing about the Celtic saints has given me the impression that the way of St John of the Cross was vastly different from St Columba's, and that though they both finished up with the same degree of contemplation and so on, Columba's route was, so to speak, the more natural and integrated. The Celts do seem to have brought the business of seeing and living life as a whole and in the presence of God to a fine art.

One of the most striking things about the Celtic period in Ireland is the extreme poverty of the material background as indicated by recent excavation reports of metal-workers' sites, etc., set against the things these people produced, like the Book of Kells and the Ardagh chalice. But we seem to be so busy making and watching television that we have no time for art or inspiration of that sort!

It was with this idea at the back of my mind that I suggested putting more philosophy into THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT, even though I realise that its proper place is in *Blackfriars*. It does seem to me that one way to break out of the present departmentalised and technological mess in which we appear to be and achieve some sort of integration is to develop a co-ordinating Catholic philosophy, and that the philosophical background ought to be stressed in any writing on spiritual matters. . . .

Aherla, Co. Cork.

D. D. C. POCHIN MOULD

REVIEWS

ENGLISH DRAWINGS OF THE Tenth AND ELEVENTH CENTURIES. By Francis Wormald. (Faber; 30s.)

The importance of a book on the history of a special period and style of art in a journal of this nature lies in the light it throws on the spirit and religion of the age. And alternatively the history of the religion of the age will throw light on the art. Too often these histories follow parallel paths and are never allowed to meet. But it is fascinating to follow Professor Wormald's erudite yet living account of the line drawings in these English MSS. with the story of the Christian life of the age. With the revival of monasticism under St Dunstan came the revival of Christian life in England and inevitably an increase in the use of books of prayer and learning. These were influenced in their making by the Carolingian renaissance on the continent, but developed with a vivacity and joy that seems to be English in origin. It is a pity that the scribes' masterpieces of living figures should be termed 'illusionist', as distinct from the later formalisations that are called 'stylist'. This professional term should be changed. There was no illusion in the life of those monks inspired by the simplicity of the great St Dunstan; and while they invariably copy continental archetypes and never 'invent' or 'create' their own figures or scenes, they inspire an entirely new life into the original types. No wonder Professor Wormald on two occasions is driven to compare these drawings with early Chinese work, for in both the artist is intellectually, spiritually, alive and informs the material he uses with that life. No illusion here. When the first freedom of spirit begins to fall back on to fashions and laws the 'stylist' makes his patterns, though the artist does not cease from inspiring life into the figures of the page. And during these two centuries the great spiritual leaders were insisting at once on the 'stylised' form of Eucharistic worship together with the freedom, the 'illusionist' vitality, of the vernacular scriptures and preaching. Both elements were at work in the religious revival. It is interesting however to note that while the Anglo-Saxon spirit lingered after the Norman conquest mainly at Worcester under St Wulfstan, the Anglo-Saxon drawing was still encouraged at Canterbury under Lanfranc. A study, then, of Professor Wormald's text with a careful comparison of the fifty-eight excellent plates will help greatly in the understanding of English spirituality, and should form the background to anyone's plans for the re-introduction of the new spirit of Christianity into this country. The reader will be struck particularly by the sower (plate 12), the spirit brooding over the waters (plate 18), and the wheel-like figure (plate 27).

CONRAD PEPLER, O.P.

SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL. By Mgr Jean Calvet. Translated by Lancelot C. Sheppard. (Burns Oates; 21s.)

Materials for the life of St Vincent de Paul are very ample: the *Correspondence*, *Entretiens*, *Documents* published by Father P. Coste in 1924 fill fourteen volumes, and the definitive life by the same writer runs to another three. Biographies are correspondingly numerous, from the first, by Louis Abelly in 1664, down to our own day. But there was room for a single-volume up-to-date work in English, and a translation of Mgr Calvet's *vie*, first published in 1948, was a good choice.

Mgr Calvet's account of the saint is full without being wearisome, and throughout he presents Vincent as a man, a man who achieved holiness. The distinction between the man and the saint in the same person, though it may have didactic uses, is an unreal one: 'mixed characters' are not unknown; a man may attain heroic virtue only in his last years, or last moments, but he is the same person all the way through; St Augustine of Hippo was still the Aurelius Augustinus who was living before 386. In the case of St Vincent there are certain questions about his earlier years: Mgr Calvet supports what may be called the conservative view; but whatever be the exact truth he remains Vincent de Paul. There is nothing in this book equivalent to 'The humility . . . charity . . . devotion of our saint'. The section called 'His Spirituality' is related to the whole man and his work. 'Vincent de Paul was not a "Bérullian" mystic. All those terms which in Bérulle are the premises of speculation and contemplation in Vincent become the springboard for action. . . . Bérulle loves God in God; Vincent loved God in man.' That should be sufficient answer to some critics of the film *Monsieur Vincent*.

Vincent de Paul is one of those saints the relevance of whose life to our own times stands out clearly. A perhaps lesser known example is his attitude towards Protestants: 'he looked on these "separated brethren" as brothers, and he treated them as brothers, with respect and love', and, it may be added, without patronage or condescension towards their uprightness and achievements. His missionaries were sent out to Catholics, and he 'therefore forbade his subjects to deal contentiously with controversial questions in the pulpit, or to issue challenges to Protestant ministers in any place or for any reason at all. In addition, he required them to avoid anything in the exterior manifestation of worship which bordered on display lest it should upset the Protestants.' His remarks on Catholics and Huguenots before the law (pp. 88-89) are a masterpiece of charity and justice. No doubt we may here see the influence of St Francis de Sales, one of the chief sources of Vincent's inspiration.

Mr Lancelot Sheppard should by now be sufficiently well known as a translator to make it needless to say that his English version reads easily and convincingly.

DONALD ATTWATER

THE SPIRIT OF LOVE. By C. F. Kelley. (Longmans; 21s.)

St Francis de Sales, in whom his contemporaries saw Christ once more walking on earth, is the great guide on the path to holiness. The Church calls him, for this reason, the Doctor of Devotion. His way, as Mr Kelly sets out to show, was the way of love. Love was his definition of perfection; and not only its definition, but the way leading to it. Between the extremes of lax sentimentalism and severe asceticism, he steered a middle course. 'Gentleness, always gentleness', he cries to the ascetics. 'Be moderate in all things except in the love of God', he warns the laxists. This *via media* of love harmonises the various aspects of life both natural and supernatural into an ordered whole. Basing his teaching on the sure principles of philosophy and theology, St Francis shows us that God is love; that through and for that love we were made; and that to that love we must make some return from our human hearts and wills. This demands some knowledge of theology—the study of God. It demands an appreciation of our place in the scheme of things. It requires a clear idea of how to establish contact with God by prayer and to grow in the likeness of God in our daily lives by the practice of the virtues—especially the little ones suitable to our state.

St Francis was not a man of extremes; that is why gentleness is his keynote. In all that concerns God and the soul and the relationship between the two he is never off-centre. His path is the *via media*—'the gentle, unassuming and patient way'. This does not mean that he would accept or condone a mediocre standard or a minimum of effort. On the contrary, there should be no limit to our love and what it may produce. 'God is greater than our heart', he said; 'shame on us if we are content to love Him by rule or measure.' Rendering his teaching no less exacting than any of the other great spiritual masters, by his balanced approach, by insisting that sanctity is synonymous with sanity, St Francis succeeded in making it more attractive.

The need for a scholarly yet popular exposition of the salesian doctrine of love has been wonderfully met by the American author of this book. His splendid treatment of the subject ranks with Professor Muller's excellent study of St Francis de Sales—the only other comprehensive analysis of the spirit of St Francis available in English. The doctrine is not divorced from its master; and so it lives and seems to acquire a new influence. St Francis is allowed to speak for himself on almost every page, and various details of his life are brought in when relevant, giving clarity and vitality to what might otherwise so easily be simply dry bones. Full and helpful notes together with the useful bibliography and index complete this very satisfying addition to salesian writing.

VINCENT KERNS, M.S.F.S.

CONFLICT AND LIGHT (Sheed and Ward, 10s. 6d.) is a translation effectively made from *Trouble et Lumière*, one of the Etude Carmelitaine series edited by Père Bruno, O.C.D.

The work is composed of a number of lectures delivered by priests and psychiatrists in conference over the problem of guilt as seen in the confessional and in the consulting room. As the contributors are experts in their respective fields and are talking to each other, the tone of the lectures, their terminology and their content are such that only those with some psychological knowledge will fully appreciate the richness of their material.

There are two parts to the book. In the first part there is an analysis of sin and of guilt. Mgr Journet begins this discussion with an analysis of sin as human fault and as offence against an Infinite God, the ontological malice of which can only best be seen in the perspective of the redemptive death of Christ. Fr Beirnaert continues the analysis by arguing that sin exists only when there is at least an implicit recognition of God—a somewhat doubtful premiss, for it would excuse the atheist who explicitly refuses to accept God from the practice of the moral law, and some atheists have been renowned for their respectability. Three psychiatrists then contribute their valuable clinical experience on the relative strength of the unconscious formulating a false sense of guilt. Dr Dolto describes the formation of false conscience in childhood through faulty adult teaching, and Professor Allers in his paper on Psychological Aspects of Confession warns us that from the nature of things no confessor can take on the role of psychiatrist, as indeed no consulting-room can ever replace the confessional. Père Philippe finally reminds us of the necessity for jurists and moralists to accept the findings of psychopathology when they are called upon to judge a neurotic penitent.

The main message of this first part is that false guilt is a disintegrating canker which destroys personality; but true guilt, once it is accepted, recognised and offered to God in Christ, liberates fresh powers of action and occasions joy among the angels of God.

In the second part a Consultor of the Congregation of Rites establishes what are the objective norms of holiness which the Church seeks in the process of Beatification. The life of God's servant is seen as a whole and it appears in authentic cases that there is an extraordinary harmony and perfection in the humanity and in the psychological and spiritual integrity of the *Beatus*. Piety, says Gustave Thibon in another paper, means love of God transcendent and love of God immanent in his creation, and who, he asks, has a greater appreciation of the beauty of the world than John of the Cross? If we feel that there is impurity in things, then it means that our hearts are projecting their impurity upon reality. Thus, says Père Lucien Marie, we must follow the example of St John of the

Cross and restore hierarchy in our souls, put our spiritual house in order, and we shall find in this discipline, where love and charity cast out fear and guilt, that 'this life is a blessed one, like to that of the estate of innocence wherein all the harmony and ability of man's sensual part served him for greater recreation and as a help to a knowledge and love of God in peace and concord with his higher part'. (*Spirit. Cant.*)

ALAN KEENAN, O.F.M.

OF THE IMITATION OF CHRIST. Translated by Abbot Justin McCann. (Burns Oates; from 8s. 6d.)

THE IMITATION OF CHRIST. A new translation by Leo Sherley-Price. (Penguin Classics; 2s. 6d.)

Two new versions bring a famous book before another generation of readers. Abbot McCann's has the usual form of the book of devotion—black binding, cross on cover—but is distinguished by the convenience of its shape and size and the clarity of its print. The translation is a new rendering which abolishes much of what the Penguin translator calls 'pseudo-Jacobean'; as, for example, the use of the second person singular unless when addressing God (though there is a passage in III, 6 where the devil is addressed as 'thou'). The text is divided into the now traditional sections, and there is a practical index. A short Preface gives some account of A Kempis and his work. (It seems to be implied that Gerard Groote was a priest. He remained a deacon.) It is a very nice edition.

The second version is in the familiar form of a Penguin book and the translator (who writes from H.M.S. *Indefatigable*) defines his purpose as 'to provide an accurate, unabridged, and readable modern translation'. The second person singular goes altogether, so does the division into sections. There is a sensible Introduction, which includes what used to be called the 'argument' of the books and relates them to the three classical 'ways' of the spiritual life. This neo-Elizabethan version should appeal to those who come fresh to the book, and it is always interesting. But perhaps one short passage will show that the often deceptive simplicity of the original is not easily matched. The latin has: 'Quia post hiemem sequitur aestas, post noctem redit dies, et post tempestatem magna serenitas' (II, 8); for which we have: 'for after winter comes summer, night turns to day, and after a storm comes fair weather'. The meaning is there, of course; but something more than the rhythm has been lost with 'redit'. Some renderings are unusual; for example, taken at random, 'respect the knowledge that is entrusted to you' (I, 2) for 'potius *time* de data tibi notitia'; or, 'whoever loves God knows well the sound of His voice' (III, 5), where 'vox clamat' seems surely to anticipate the 'magnus clamor' of the next sentence. (By the way, a sentence has slipped out in XXI, 1.). But it is ill picking holes in a work that was so well worth doing and so well done.

A. E. H. SWINSTEAD

TRAITE DU BAPTEME. By Tertullian. Text, introduction and notes by R. F. Reffoué, O.P. French translation by M. Douzy, O.P. (Sources Chrétiennes No. 35; Cerf and Blackfriars.)

Tertullian was already in his forties when he wrote this treatise on Baptism sometime between 200 and 206 A.D. He was attacking an extreme Gnostic sect as well as preparing neophytes for the sacrament, and he was still keenly aware of the Church as the Mother of the faithful. He concludes the treatise by urging the catechumens when they are re-born of this new Mother to beseech the Father and Lord to pour forth his 'charisms' upon themselves and to remember the 'sinner Tertullian' when they so pray. Later he broke away from his 'Mother's' home; but here he speaks with earnest orthodoxy of this new birth, this liberation from the power of the devil, this entry into the kingdom of heaven. In a most informative introduction to this edition Père Reffoué shows the two symbolismes that Tertullian draws upon: the natural symbolism of water as the principle of fecundity, shown when the spirit brooded over the waters and leading to the conception of baptism as regeneration; and the biblical symbolism of the waters of destruction as seen in Exodus leading to the idea of baptism as liberation. The text, the original of which appears opposite the French translation, also abounds with allusion to the primitive liturgy of initiation. Tertullian, for example, draws a sharp contrast between the pomps and ceremonies (still referred to in our present baptismal rite) of the pagan and mystery religions and the simplicity of the function of plunging the catechumen into the font. This study, then, not only gives us easy access to the earliest work on Christian baptism; it also provides, with the help of the illuminating introduction and useful notes, a most instructive work on the nature of the sacrament and the meaning of its sacramental rites.

C.P.

THE STORY OF THE ROSARY IN PROSE AND VERSE, as produced by Alan Rye. (Ditchling Press; 1s.)

For those who were able to be present at the Wembley Rally, this book will provide a welcome and permanent reminder of the Rosary Pageant. To read at leisure the text of a drama once seen is always a pleasure; to be able to read and ponder the well-chosen lines which describe the fifteen mysteries of the rosary can be not only a happy reminiscence, but a real aid to the better praying of the rosary itself. For those who did not see this pageant, this book, with its clear illustrations, may give some hint of what was missed. Better still, if it inspires parishes, guilds and smaller groups to attempt something similar, though perhaps on a more domestic scale, this book will be, not a memorial to something past, but a step towards greater understanding and love of the rosary.

R.B.H.

GOD WHO ACTS. By G. Ernest Wright. (S.C.M. Press; 8s.)

This is one of the series of 'Studies in Biblical Theology' that includes a number of short works by distinguished non-Catholic scholars. Here the author contends that biblical theology should not, or rather cannot, be presented as a system of 'propositional dogmatics'. It is and must be a recital of God's acts, and of inferences from them. His acts are known by the interpretation of the historical events, and can be described only in the concepts of the biblical history. Biblical theology is defined as the confessional recital of the redemptive acts of God; the Bible is neither history for its own sake, nor a dogmatic system; but revelation in a particular historical medium.

The author himself objects that revelation must needs be given a logical, coherent form; he quotes with respect and affection the fine, orthodox and scholastic doctrine of God in the Westminster Confession, which is that of his own communion; but, he complains, 'it does not quite introduce us to the biblical God'. He then produces a system of his own: a doctrinal scheme given in historical terms. He makes the good point that Old Testament and New Testament must be taken together; Christ is the culminating point in the redemptive history.

One has much sympathy with the author's contention, and there is a great deal that is valuable in his book. Among Catholics the faith is too often taught in a merely schematic and abstract way. We need to present it far more 'in the round', with the action of life, as in so much of the Bible. But all the same, the author does not find that certain parts of Scripture fit well into his theory, for instance the Wisdom books; and he has a somewhat irrational horror of those categories, Hellenic and abstract as they are, thanks to which the Church has come to understand God's work of redemption.

JOHN HIGGENS, O.S.B.

GRAVITY AND GRACE. By Simone Weil. Translated by Emma Crauffurd. (Routledge and Kegan Paul; 15s.)

There is no need at this date to spend time in recommending the work of Simone Weil to the English-speaking world; she has rightly become established as one of the most powerful religious thinkers of our time. Might I, however, mention two facts about her which are related in *Simone Weil, telle que nous l'avons connue* by P. Perrin and Gustave Thibon (who also contributes a fine introduction to the work reviewed here). The first is that Simone Weil's notebooks contains many sentences which do not represent a considered judgment, but were set down as ideas that had occurred to her and might later serve as material for further reflection. When we are aware of this I think we read her work with more understanding. Secondly, even her fierce asceticism had not removed her from the level of human frailty: she needed her cigarettes!

Perhaps this gap in her asceticism should not be stressed; but it is worth mentioning, because she is such a powerful thinker that the reader is liable to be crushed by the sheer light and brilliance of her insights. Seen through a haze of tobacco-smoke they acquire warmth and humanity.

The following quotation, however, will do more than any reviewer can both to recommend Simone Weil's work and to indicate the quality of Miss Crauffurd's translation:

'The sin which we have in us emerges from us and spreads outside ourselves setting up a contagion of sin. Thus, when we are in a temper, those around us grow angry. Or again, from superior to inferior: anger produces fear. But at the contact of a perfectly pure being there is a transmutation and the sin becomes suffering. Such is the function of the just servant of Isaiah, of the Lamb of God. Such is redemptive suffering. All the criminal violence of the Roman Empire ran up against Christ and in him it became pure suffering. Evil beings, on the other hand, transform simple suffering (sickness for example) into sin.'

DONALD NICHOLL

L'EDUCATION DU SENS LITURGIQUE. By H. Lubienka de Lenval. (Cet 'L'Esprit Liturgique'. Blackfriars.)

The author of this book is an experienced educationalist, and resumes in these pages her principles and practice in forming children (and adults) to a formal participation in the Church's liturgy. Although it is small in extent, it raises large problems and could easily stir up controversy if some passages were taken tragically by those interested in the liturgical movement.

The book certainly has much to recommend it. Basing herself on 1 Thess. 5, 23, the author well says that no education is complete unless it is composed of bodily discipline, intellectual culture and spiritual life; and God is the principle cohesion (p. 14). And all these elements are found in the liturgy itself, by which the Church educates her children for eternity. Thus education for the liturgy is principally education by and in the liturgy. The Mass is not principally an intellectual exercise nor the 'joyful elbowing of a crowd', but is above all the Mystery in Act; celebrated first of all for God, it teaches the people to rejoin God through Christ (p. 30). Christ's action is perpetuated in the Mass, where the priest holds Christ's place and speaks in the name of the people. But the liturgy is by no means exclusively exterior: the education of the liturgical sense is a progress towards 'interior silence' thanks to the active participation in the Holy Mysteries that Blessed Pius X recommended. One presumes that by 'interior silence' the author means contemplative prayer and all that this implies, in the sense that Sister Elizabeth of the Trinity used the term. One welcomes this emphasis as it is not always found in our liturgical publica-

tions, and it is in the line of the teaching of St Vincent Ferrer: '*Missa est altius opus contemplationis quod possit esse*'.

But unfortunately the book contains no references to *Mediator Dei*, nor does the author seem to be influenced by its teaching. The Holy Father warns us against depreciating subjective or personal devotion and teaches that both objective and personal devotion are necessary for the full development of the Christian life (cf. paras. 30-41). But in spite of this the author contrasts too exclusively the 'theocentric' prayer of the Psalms and Christian antiquity with the 'egocentric' prayer of modern man 'who suffers from hypertrophy of the ego', and takes as examples of the latter the acts of faith, hope and charity in which 'I' is the subject, and the well-known prayer of St Ignatius Loyola, 'Lord Jesus, teach me to be generous', etc. (pp. 38-39). The examples are certainly not well chosen; a canonised saint, who is explicitly commended by the Church as a master of the spiritual life, has no need of our defence; and it is St Thomas's teaching that the acts of the theological virtues are formally theocentric (I-II, 62, 1 and 2). In any case, such acts are frequently found in the psalms themselves—*In te, Domine, speravi; diligam te, Domine, fortitudo mea*, etc. Of course there is a difference of accent and idiom between the prayers of Christian antiquity and certain modern compositions, but there is also a very real fundamental unity of prayer through the ages. Not only in the fourth century, but also in the sixteenth and the twentieth has it been true to say with St Augustine: *Fide, spe et charitate Deus colitur*.

Another statement that would surely cause discussion is that 'the missal is made to prepare Mass at home, but not to be carried to church. In church only the priest is responsible for the text; the faithful should follow it by action and intention, in silence, as their ancestors did.' (p. 33.) 'The people are not responsible for the collects, or the prayers at the foot of the altar, and still less with following the canon word for word, which would be celebrating, not participating' (p. 48). Yet *Mediator Dei* explicitly approves of the use of the missal by the faithful 'so that they may join in prayer with the priest, using his very words and offering the sentiments of the Church herself.' (no. 111.)

In the second part of the book the author describes her method of teaching children to pray, and teaching them Latin in a biblical idiom. But here too her personal tastes are very much in evidence, and perhaps few readers will share her preferences for dark churches and the Oriental rites, or her lack of appreciation of the Roman collects. It would be ungracious to draw too much attention to errors of historical detail or of Latin grammar in this section—instead, let us thank the author for her enthusiasm for the Church's liturgy even if we would wish her statement of her case to be more theological and less intemperate.

HUGH FARMER, O.S.B.

SECULAR INSTITUTES: A Symposium. (Blackfriars Publications; 5s. 6d.)

The present Holy Father has defined Secular Institutes as 'Societies, whether clerical or lay, whose members profess the evangelical counsels in the world as their aim, in order to attain Christian perfection and the full exercise of the apostolate'. Neither the idea nor the wording is completely new, though the title as it stands is. In the first half of the last century associations of this type already began to be established, and received from the Holy See the status of '*piae sodalitates*'. Their scope was 'to follow the evangelical counsels . . . and to undertake with greater freedom those duties of charity which the religious orders were almost, or even absolutely, prevented from carrying out, owing to the evils of the times'. (S. C. Epis. Reg., 11th August, 1889.) To this description the Pope, in his *Provida Mater* of 2nd February, 1947, has added the words, 'in the world', which indicate the secular or lay character of these institutes which have come into being as part of the organic life of the Church.

This book throws a good deal of light on these Institutes which have now been placed on a permanent footing. As organic bodies they do approximate to religious institutes, without losing their lay character. It seems certain that their purpose is apostolic, and that it is not sufficient for their constitution to have as their aim the Christian perfection of the members, as some have tried to maintain. It is therefore useful to be given here the canonical framework in which they must be placed if they are to exist. Perhaps then Miss Fry, who collected most of the materials, overstates her case in the introduction, and seems to contradict what is said in the following pages.

A feature of these Secular Institutes is that the members bind themselves privately to the three evangelical counsels, by vow, oath or consecration (the English rendering of *and* for *or* is incorrect), and are not obliged to live the community life. The translation of the *Provida Mater* should have distinguished between commendation, the *decretum laudis*, and approbation, which are three stages in which the Holy See gives recognition to these institutes. By the two latter alone they cease to be purely diocesan.

Many will be grateful for this Symposium as an introduction to a way of life consecrated to God whilst living in the world, and having the full approval of the Church. But as the Pope has wisely said, 'We have to guard against the constant rise of fresh Institutes, the foundations of which are not infrequently insecurely and imprudently laid'.

AMBROSE FARRELL, O.P.

NOTICES

DESCLEE DE BROUWER have long established themselves as leading Catholic publishers on the Continent. Their latest production is a most striking example of their skill: two hundred full-page photographs accompany the life of St Francis in a volume of 300 pages. The photos are beautiful in themselves and bring to life the background of the Poverello's history. As a contemplative work it deserves its 'Preface Mystique' by Stanislas Fumet (*François d'Assise. Sur les traces du Poverello*; 220 Belgian francs). They have also produced a 450-page book on the 'Whole-Christ' by Mgr Guerry, Bishop of Cambrai: a most practical book addressed to the ordinary Christian on a subject that is still remote and sophisticated. (*Dans le Christ Total*; 90 Belgian francs.)

THE CATHOLIC DIGEST has now published a READER—500 pages of selected articles that have appeared over the last fifteen years. Well produced and handsome, it makes a depressing symbol of the times. (Doubleday, New York; \$3.95.)

CHRIST IN DACHAU (Newman, Oxford; 3s.) reminds us of the Christian side of the awful effects of war and totalitarianism. It consists of brief accounts of Christians who suffered in German concentration camps—Germans themselves entering into the work of redemption in the fullest manner. The book, which will move the most sluggish souls, is written by the prisoners themselves and shows how God can draw the greatest good out of the greatest evil. If you ever feel inclined to ask why God allows such hideous evil, read this book; read it in any case during Lent and Passiontide. It has been well produced so cheaply that many may profit by the glimpse of glory within the mess that man makes.

THE CARMELITE NUN who wrote *Our Eternal Vocation, Each Hour Remains* and other books has now produced HEARTBREAK HOUSE (Sands; 10s. 6d.) to show how man also can deal with the mess from the contemplative cloister. Good humour and sound sense mingle with more supernatural wisdom. *Sponsa Christi*, modern philosophy and psychology, anchoresses and youth all come in for most readable and constructive comment.

THE BIBLICAL DOCTRINE OF WORK is a theme that could provide great help to the modern worker today, and it was for this reason that the World Council of Churches has devoted some of its energies to this study. Dr Alan Richardson, Chairman of the Study Department of the Council, here provides a most valuable introduction to the study of work (S.C.M. Press; 5s.). He begins with the World of God in Creation and goes on through the New Testament to apply the principles to modern Christian life. Dr Richardson's view may however be rather

limited. He thinks that work such as labouring as a doctor or bricklayer is only a secondary form of work for a Christian, to be regarded only as a means. He also feels that in the primitive ages there was no time for leisure so that the Bible cannot help us very much on how to use our leisure. However, disagreement with his views will lead students to think it out for themselves, which is what he would desire.



EXTRACTS

LITURGY, that practical as well as doctrinal organ of the Society of St Gregory (quarterly, 5s. per annum, from Miss Lamigeon, 17 Gregories Road, Beaconsfield), in its October (1952) issue reprints the Lenten pastoral of Bishop Walsh of Aberdeen. Its Lenten message should be repeated every year in as many dioceses as possible, for it is a courageous and clear appeal to the faithful to take an active part in their greatest heritage, the daily Sacrifice of the Mass:

God, who created us without ourselves, will not save us without ourselves. His work was completed on Calvary. But we must of our own choosing accept God and offer ourselves on the altar. . . . Let our first desire in approaching the altar be to understand what is being done there. The Mass explains itself. There are reasons for our liturgy being in Latin. The use of that ancient tongue is not imposed just to make things difficult. Most of the sacrificial prayers are said by the priest in a low voice. So there is no reason why we should not say them in our mother tongue. . . . We must never say or sing anything in Latin unless we understand it. The difficulty is not great. . . . But it is in the tradition of the Church that the people should sing. We must not run before we can walk. Before we sing the Latin words we must be used to speaking them. And we should sing hymns in our mother tongue before we begin to sing in Latin. What we ask of you, dear people, we ask along with the Holy Father. . . . We are well aware that this means breaking with the habits of a life-time. The priest at the altar will turn, as it were, to face his people. The faithful will put aside their private devotions and unite with the whole parish.

His Lordship encourages the choir to join with the congregation to help them all to sing; and he encourages them above all to share in the final act of union in Holy Communion.

THE MYSTERY OF UNITY is in fact the theme of the January number of *La Vie Spirituelle*. Père Chatelain, O.P., develops this theme of the effect of union which the Sacrament both as sacrifice and sacrament produces in the Church, and he concludes by suggesting that the eucharistic devotion should also have this character.

When I receive the body of Christ I do not only cleave directly to our Saviour, but I cleave just as directly to all his other members who are in some way my own members. Am I really invaded by the Spirit of God and of Christ, that spirit of love and mercy, if I continue to look with indifference on those other members of our own body who suffer because they are not perfectly at one with God? The bread that we receive is the body of Christ, the Christians who receive it with us are also the body of Christ. Some of these Christians are for us separated brethren. Can I be truly united to the body of Christ if I do nothing to lessen this suffering and to prevent this scandal? How can I share in the body of Christ by eating it in his eucharist without wishing also for the unity of this very body?

The whole number is dedicated to this aspect of unity, the unity of all Christians in the body of Christ, which is *the* mystery of Christ with us. But to see this in even wider and deeper surroundings we must turn to the December (1952) issue of *Lumière et Vie* (Saint-Alban-Laysse) which considers the Mass as the source of life and unity. In this issue the reader will find that great apostle of unity, Père Yves Congar, O.P., developing the theme of the Bishop of Aberdeen: 'The Share of the Faithful in the Eucharistic Offering, according to Catholic Tradition and *Magisterium*'. Among the various aspects of this tradition he shows how the Eucharist in ancient times was often thought of as an act of gratitude to God for the whole of Creation, which he had given to us and of which we now return the firstfruits. They naturally offered not only bread and wine, but also candles, honey, oil and grapes, and so with the faithful the good things of God's creation were also able to share in this act of union and unification.

Père Grail, the Editor of *Lumière et Vie*, contributes an article on the Mass as Sacrament of the Cross.

This bread and this wine thus transformed into the body and blood of the Lord are meant to be eaten and drunk. In the sacred scripture there is an insistence on this commandment and its fulfilment: 'eat ye', 'drink ye', 'and they all did drink'. And it is not a question of just any food and drink, but of the victim of a sacrifice. Eating what is offered to God is one of the most ancient practices of mankind. . . . When Jesus took the bread and gave it to his disciples to eat after having uttered over it the words that changed it into his body, he was inviting them to take their share of the power of his sacrifice, of his coming death.

In a stirring foreword to this issue the Archbishop of Chambéry adds his voice to that of his confrère of Aberdeen. He says, in effect, we in France have offered the faithful almost every facility to join actively in the Mass; but has it been effective? Do they really live the Mass? Everyone should put his life in the Mass and the Mass in his life.

The issue of the Vernacular, which was raised by His Lordship the Bishop of Aberdeen, has its echo in the January issue of the *Clergy Review* (Burns Oates; 3s. 6d.), where Fr Catterall asks for the prayer of the Psalter as part of Evening Service.

My first plea, then, is for a wider use of the English Psalter in our Evening Service. At present there does not appear to be a Catholic Psalter in English adapted for congregational use. Why is this? Is there no demand?

We would wholly support his urgent demand for an English congregational Psalter and many English congregations to use it. It is strange that we should often be so preoccupied about how to pray and yet ignore the prayers which God has given us through the poets of the Old Testament and which the Church has used since she was first formed.

The authority of the Religious Superior not only of jurisdiction but also of dominion—*Potestas Dominativa*—is discussed with clear precision by Père Delchard, S.J., in *Revue des Communautés Religieuses* (November to December; Brussels). He is commenting on a recent reply of the Commission for the Interpretation of the Code of Canon Law.

THE ROSARY, edited by Very Rev. Anthony Ross, O.P., of Woodchester, Glos., and published by Samuel Walker of Hinckley, Leics, for 3d. per month, has begun a new series with a new format and cover. It is smaller and handier to keep and to read. The articles, now much more directly and clearly laid out, are very lively and interesting. The January issue—New Series, Vol. I, No. 1—has a notable article on the legend of Canterbury by Hilary J. Carpenter, O.P.

FETES AND SAISONS began the new year with an exciting brochure on *St Paul* (Cerf and Blackfriars; 1s. 3d.). The reader will not be surprised to find the story of the Apostle's shipwreck off Malta illustrated by a photo of a man in a sou'wester standing in the gunnels of a modern ship with the sea driving over him. 'The Journeys of St Paul' can be taught from this without tears.